



A LONDON PUB



FOR EVERY OCCASION



BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Herb Lester Associates

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Acknowledgements
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About the book

London is packed with pubs, but finding a really good one is not always easy.

Whether you want to relax in a garden or shelter from rain, marvel at architecture or enjoy a live act, find a convenient meeting point or a place to hide, bring your dog to the pub or stroke the resident cat, it is Herb Lester's role to anticipate your desires and act as your guide.

With 161 tried-and-tested pubs, plus a handy fold-out map of London.

About the authors

Herb Lester Associates publish city guides with style. Their beautifully designed fold-out maps sidestep famous landmarks and faddy new attractions in favour of a more beguiling world.

Their carefully researched and highly opinionated guides highlight the best of new and old; book and record shops, cobblers, museums and galleries, theirs is a quest for good quality things to see, eat, drink and do. With a Herb Lester guide you will not be left wanting; sustenance, expertly poured drinks and splendid entertainment - as well as a gentlemen's hat shop, a purveyor of preserved fish and a vintage furniture shop for life's little emergencies, may be around the next corner.

www.herblester.com

A London Pub for Every Occasion

161 of the usual and unusual

Brought to you by
Herb Lester Associates

Edited by Ben Olins & Jane Smillie

Written by Ben Olins

Illustrations by Anna Hurley



**EBURY
PRESS**

Introduction

Those of us who like pubs already have our favourites, places we barely consider for being so woven into our lives. Away from routine and familiar territory things get more confusing, which is where our guide comes in. It is our intention to introduce the reader to new pubs and to encourage a fresh look at old favourites.

We have divided the book into chapters based on scenarios: where to go when it's sunny, or wet, to meet before a show, after a trip to the Natural History Museum, before boarding a train at St Pancras, when you're alone, or when you have friends you can't be bothered to chat with. Then there are pubs for moods, interests and atmosphere: beautiful old pubs, pubs with wonderful beer and a handful that fill you with such a feeling of bonhomie you can't bear to leave them.

In creating any guide to London, the city's vastness is an issue to be grappled with. It's simply too big to do equal justice to all areas. We have weighted this guide to the centre, the part of the city in which all Londoners have an equal share, where friends from the south and north of the river meet on common ground. The east and parts of the north are also strongly represented, which is a reflection of a particularly vibrant (and highly competitive) pub culture rather than mere parochialism on our part.

We should confess our preference for pubs with real ale, real fires and little or no music; for friendly staff, dim light and a couple of animals roaming around. Equally, we struggle to enjoy pubs that have large TVs, blackboards with humorous sayings, or fashionably abbreviated names.

This book's selections are based on dogged research filtered through the prejudices listed above. We have tried to be fair but, more important, we have tried to steer the reader to places we believe they'll appreciate for one reason or another.

Our research for this book took us to parts of London that we'd never been to before, it gave us the opportunity to revisit favourite pubs and to find new ones. We hope you enjoy using this guide as much as we did compiling it.

It's not too early is it?

Those whose jobs demand inhospitable hours are entitled to an after-work drink; for the rest of us, we pose the above question. Should you require a glass of beer with your bacon and eggs, read on.



Fox & Anchor

115 Charterhouse Street EC1M 6AA

Telephone: 020 7250 1300

Monday-Friday: 7am-11pm; Saturday: 8.30am-11pm;

Sunday: 8.30am-10pm

Transport: Barbican, Farringdon

Rescued from dereliction by the Malmaison hotel chain, this has become more than just a pub, with its own half-

dozen rooms to rent upstairs and a strong emphasis on food. It's beautiful still - the tiles are particularly noteworthy - but the narrow layout can make it a squeeze at busy times, never more so than after tackling the City Boy breakfast. This gargantuan serving, which draws on nearby Smithfield meat market for inspiration, includes liver, kidney, steak, sausage, black and white puddings, bacon, eggs and sundry non-meat elements. And it's served with a pint of stout too. There are more modest options available, but no matter which you opt for, try to bag one of the private wooden booths in the back. Not only are they attractive, they're useful for a quick doze after your meal.

The Hope

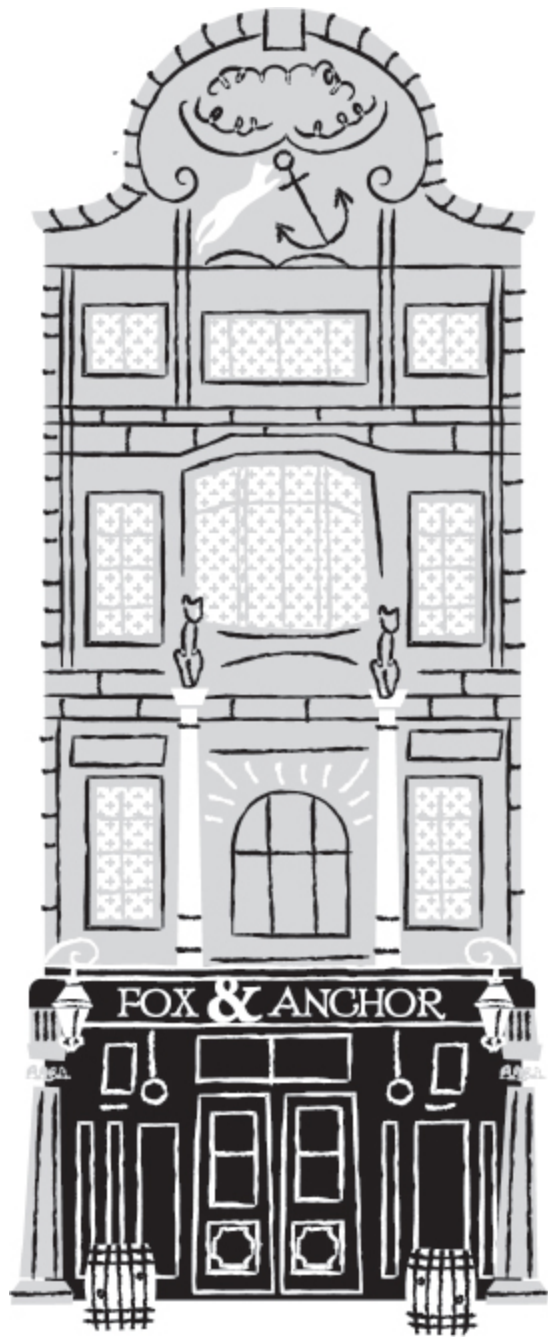
94 Cowcross Street EC1M 6BH

Telephone: 020 7253 8525 (restaurant) or 020 7250 1442 (bar)

Monday-Friday: 6am-11pm; Saturday: 1pm-11pm

Transport: Farringdon

If the Fox & Anchor's reimagining of the old meat market pub for the modern consumer feels inauthentic, the experience here may be more to your taste. Modest in size, it has a handsome exterior, with central arched windows and doors continuing the pattern either side. Inside it's somewhat worn; maintained rather than cherished. Its regulars show evident surprise at new arrivals, but it's safe to assume that not much would shock the denizens of any pub that opens at 6am. Breakfasts - large, small or liquid - are served to shift workers, weary revellers, and anyone else in need.





The Market Porter

9 Stoney Street SE1 9AA

Telephone: 020 7407 2495

Monday-Friday: 6am-9am & 11am-11pm;

Saturday: 12noon-11pm; Sunday: 12noon-10.30pm

Transport: London Bridge

It's all about how you define breakfast, but if a pint and a packet of dry roasted is what you require before the school run, or indeed after a gruelling 2am start from your smallholding to make a delivery to Borough Market, here's where to go. For somewhere so intimately bound up with London's best known food market, it's extraordinarily, even refreshingly, basic - fish and chips is served sans samphire, for example - but the beer range is good and this large pub remains hugely popular, whatever the time of day.

Old Kings Head

28 Holywell Row EC2A 4JB

Telephone: 020 7426 0658

Monday-Friday: 8am-11pm; Saturday: 11am-11pm

Transport: Shoreditch High Street, Old Street

With no ancient market or all-night postal depot to service, offering breakfast here is just canny business sense. On a rat run from City Road to Great Eastern Street, dozens of bleary-eyed workers stop in to pick up one of the particularly good bacon sandwiches (just £2) on the way to the office. You can eat in too; the menu includes eggs Benedict, granola, pancakes and, of course, the full monty. With talk radio burbling and the bustle of early morning deliveries and cleaning, the atmosphere is nicely industrious, with tea and coffee drinking far more evident than anything stronger.

Simpson's Tavern

Ball Court, 38½ Cornhill EC3V 9DR

Telephone: 020 7626 9985

Monday: 12noon-3pm; Tuesday-Friday: 8am-3pm
Transport: Bank

If breakfast in a tavern appeals, but perhaps without the aroma of last night's slops, at this remarkably unaltered 18th-century establishment you can tuck in to a full English (Cumberland sausage, bacon, black or white pudding, egg, mushrooms, tomato, baked beans and unlimited toast), porridge or simple poached eggs, and order your sharpener from the separate bar area. Of course, coffee and tea are also available, but it's nice to know the option's there for something stronger.



through the greenery; it's not for nothing twice winner of London in Bloom awards. Inside, all architectural features are similarly obscured by the accumulation of *stuff*. Stuck to walls or suspended from the ceiling are life-size cut-outs of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, old radios, baskets, an accordion and Sir Winston Churchill in old newspapers, photos and sundry ephemera. A road sign points the way to the bar and the gents. Head to the back and you find a Thai restaurant occupying a similarly peculiar conservatory area. It's contrived and it's showy, but not without charm.

The Nags Head

53 Kinnerton Street SW1X 8ED

Telephone: 020 7235 1135

Monday-Saturday: 11am-11pm; Sunday: 12noon-10.30pm

Transport: Knightsbridge

One of a rare breed of places that insists absolutely you enjoy your own company or that of the person sitting next to you. The main bar is low, disconcertingly so, and the loftier visitor may feel like Gulliver on entering, with service somewhere around thigh height and drinkers hunkered on low stools. There's another room downstairs with a flagstone floor, its walls and ceilings liberally covered with ephemera of numerous eras; there are Edwardian seaside novelties, wooden ice skates, swords, a saddle, a typewriter. For so smart a neighbourhood, the crowd is pleasantly diverse.



